

Petoskey Middle School
Instrumental Music Department

PMS Band Handbook

Directors:
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Foreword

The success of any organization is dependent upon the spirit, pride, leadership, teamwork, dedication, and cooperation of its members. Certain rules, policies, and procedures are necessary so that the overall goals of the group are met, and the welfare of each individual member is best served. By accepting membership in the Petoskey Bands, you are agreeing to perform to the best of your abilities and work together with your teammates and instructors in making this year's band the finest musical organization that our combined efforts can produce. In order for this to occur, students will need to be responsible, attentive, and respectful, have a positive attitude, and follow the tenets of Northmen DRIVE and the Full Value Agreement.

The Directors will do their best to ensure that every student will be provided the opportunity to be successful, regardless of their ability as an incoming student or of their career ambitions following graduation. This handbook has been developed to familiarize each band member with general operation and procedures of the Petoskey Bands and standards by which all band members are expected to conduct themselves. The handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive, as every possible situation and question cannot be predicted in advance; however, a thorough knowledge of these materials is essential to the smooth operation and success of the band this year.

Philosophy

It shall be the goal of this department to further the artistic musical experiences of all students and faculty of this school and citizens of this community, state, and country who come within its influence. Through artistic performance and study, we shall attempt to pass along our great musical heritage and offer a means to further the aesthetic experiences of those with whom we come in contact.

Any student attending this public supported institution shall be eligible to be given instruction and audition for entrance into any instrumental organization supported by or affiliated directly with the school. Rules and regulations concerning membership in any instrumental music organization shall be in the best interest of the student, the group in question, the instrumental music department, the school, the community and the art of music itself.

Ensembles

6th Grade Band

All 6th grade band students are members of this ensemble. The 6th Grade Band often rehearses by instrument family (woodwind, brass, percussion) then comes together in performance. This ensemble performs at the Sixth Grade Showcase and at the PMS Spring Concert. Students are enrolled for the duration of the school year. No prior music experience or knowledge is required.

7th and 8th Grade Concert Bands

All 7th and 8th grade band students are members of their grade level's concert band. These ensembles often rehearse by instrument family (woodwind, brass, percussion) then come together in performance. These ensembles perform at the Winter Concert, Pre Festival Concert, MSBOA Band Festival, and the PMS Spring Concert. Students are enrolled for the duration of the school year. Participation in band during the previous school year is an expectation for members of these ensembles.

6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Jazz Bands

Jazz Band is composed of saxophone, trumpet, and trombone players. Students may also be assigned to play piano, bass, or drum set. 6th Grade Jazz performs at Band Aid. 7th and 8th Grade Jazz perform at the PMS Spring Concert and at Band Aid. As 7th and 8th graders, students whose primary instrument is not saxophone, trumpet, or trombone may be invited to pick up a jazz instrument as a secondary instrument to participate in jazz band. All jazz ensembles rehearse during their regularly scheduled band hour.

6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Steel Bands

Steel Band is composed primarily of middle school percussionists. As 7th or 8th graders, band members whose primary instrument is a woodwind or brass instrument may be invited to participate in their grade level's steel band. This invitation is extended to students who are consistently prepared for rehearsal, have demonstrated a sustained high level of performance on their instrument, and maintain a positive and non-distracting presence in rehearsal. Middle School Steel Bands perform at the Winter Concert, the PMS Spring Concert, and Band Aid.

Uniform

Uniform expectations vary between ensembles.

6th Grade Band: Black dress shoes, tall black socks, black dress pants, a solid white collared shirt.

7th and 8th Grade Bands: Black dress shoes, tall black socks, black dress pants, white tuxedo shirt (provided), blue bow tie (provided), blue cummerbund (provided).

Tuxedo shirt, cummerbund, and bow tie are provided to 7th and 8th grade students to use for one school year. While there is no cost to use these uniform parts, the replacement costs are as follows: White Tuxedo Shirt - \$50, Blue Bow Tie - \$10, Blue Cummerbund - \$20.

Attendance

“We succeed or we fail as a team.”

In order to have and maintain a high-quality band program, attendance from all members is essential. Performances outside of class are a normal function of each performance ensemble class. Every student is expected to participate in all scheduled functions.

In addition to the regularly scheduled band class during school hours, attendance at performances shall be expected of each student participating in band.

Attendance records for performances outside of the school day will be kept by band directors. Absences should be communicated directly to band directors; *excused absences* will be defined as the following:

1. Sudden student illness or injury
2. Family emergencies
3. Unavoidable conflict, which has been previously approved by the director, **at least one week in advance.**

A note from the parent(s) or guardian(s), which will be filed in the director’s personal files in case any question should be raised at a later date, must verify each of the above listed absences. Any unavoidable conflict must be brought to the director’s attention **at least** one week ahead of time in the form of a note from parent(s) or guardian(s). *Any unexcused absence* will lower your grade by one letter grade in the current marking period.

Concerts are attended by hundreds of individuals. If you know or suspect that you will have transportation issues on the day of a concert, please contact us to help you arrange something in advance.

Band Boosters

“We don’t need a few people who can do everything, we need a lot of people who can each do a little bit.”

The function of the Petoskey Band Boosters is to support all 6-12 band students enrolled in Petoskey Public Schools. This organization is composed entirely of volunteers, primarily parents/guardians of current band members. Band Boosters meet on the second Thursday of every month in the PMS Band Room. We encourage all band parents to join us for a meeting and find a way that they can get involved with the organization.

Grading

The purpose of grading in the Petoskey Band Program is to communicate with students and parents an accurate representation of a student's level of achievement.. Any questions about grades should be directed to the student's primary director.

Each Marking Period, students will receive grades that reflect their Effort (based on reasonable best effort in rehearsals), Preparedness (based on being prepared for class with working instrument, music, and all other necessary equipment to fully engage in class), and Performance (based on playing ability; are students playing at the grade-appropriate level).

6th Grade students are expected to practice for an average of 20 minutes per day (140 per week). Practice logs will be graded weekly, grades for practice logs are broken down as follows:

- A - 140 Minutes
- B - 110-139 Minutes
- C - 80-109 Minutes
- D - 50-79 Minutes
- E - 0-49 Minutes

For each scheduled performance, students will receive a grade equivalent to credit/no credit.

At the discretion of The Directors, graded playing tests may be assigned. These playing tests will be communicated to students via their school email.

Materials

Students are expected to have the following materials every day:

- Binder with student's name, music in page protectors
- Instrument
- PENCIL

A student's Preparedness grade will be lowered if they are not consistently prepared for class.

Communication

All performance dates, times, and locations are available at www.petoskeybands.org.

The directors encourage positive communication and are willing to discuss any aspect of a student's progress in band with his/her parents. Specific directors' office phone numbers and email addresses can be found on the band website and on ParentVue (PowerSchool).

Concert reminders, time changes, fundraiser announcements, and other relevant information will be sent to parents via email to the address found in PowerSchool.

Code of Conduct

All Petoskey Band members are to exhibit an extraordinarily high degree of behavior. We expect this, the school expects this, and therefore, you should expect this of yourself and your peers. When we travel, the reputations of your school and community are on the line.

1. All school policies regarding controlled substances, smoking, etc. will be strictly enforced.
2. Students shall comply with standards set by the school, and the student handbook regarding conduct in class, conduct while at events, conduct while traveling to and from events, and attendance.
3. On away trips: Students are responsible for loading and unloading their own equipment. There is also a need to properly mark your equipment and personal items. We are not responsible for any lost or stolen equipment on away trips.
 - a. All buses are to be left in the same condition they were found.
 - b. Chaperons are to be listened to and followed.
 - c. No obscene language or behavior will be tolerated.
 - d. School policies regarding PDA, dress code, etc. are still in effect.

Dismissal may result for any of the following reasons:

1. Aggressive behavior distracting the group consistently from the combined effort.
2. Passive behavior in which the student willfully does not contribute to the well being of the group. This includes, but is not limited to, consistent apathy, refusal to participate, and/or continued disruption of the learning environment.
3. Any questionable behavior, which is not in the best interests of the Band- alcohol, smoking, drugs, threats/acts of violence, etc.

Any time the actions of a Band student are not in keeping with the procedures and regulations herein set down, or if for any reason he/she is being considered for removal from band or to another group, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be consulted in a conference with the director(s) before any direct action will be taken.

Class Periods Outside of PMS

While normal class occurs in either Petoskey Middle School Auditorium, Band Room, or Woodwind Room, occasionally students will leave Petoskey Middle School during their scheduled band hour. Such situations may include but are not limited to: rehearsals at Petoskey High School before a concert, rehearsal at NCMC before Band Aid, attending and watching PHS Marching Northmen rehearsal at Northmen Stadium. Parents will be notified via email prior to travel of plans to take students off of Public Schools of Petoskey property.

Instrument Selection

It is a common misconception that any student can play any instrument if they just work hard enough. No instrument is necessarily easier or more difficult than any other, but each instrument will present its own challenges over time. Every student has characteristics that make them better suited for some instruments and less suited for others. Therefore, it is important to match students with instruments on which they will have the greatest chance of success during 6th grade and beyond. The two goals in fitting each student are to: 1 - Create a well balanced ensemble to ensure a positive band experience. (Just like a soccer team full of goalies won't win any championships, a band made entirely of trumpet players won't make a good band sound) 2 - Ensure that each student is placed on an instrument on which they can see success. It is the responsibility of the directors to place students on the instrument where they have the greatest potential to be successful. Parents are encouraged to attend their child's instrument fitting session. Band directors will work with families to pick the appropriate instrument together.

Families are expected to make a commitment to an instrument for at least a full year so students can develop basic skills before learning a secondary instrument. Switching instruments after 6th grade is highly unusual and has proven to be a negative experience for students. Each year of band builds on skills that students learned over the previous year. Starting a new instrument after 6th grade brings a student's development back to square one while their peers continue to learn and grow. Students in 7th and 8th grade who are experiencing a particularly high level of success on their concert band instrument may be invited to learn an additional instrument as part of jazz or steel band.

Chicago Trip

All 8th Grade Band Students are invited to participate in the Chicago Trip. This trip occurs Tuesday-Friday immediately following Memorial Day. Students will bring home information about the trip including a rough itinerary and payment plan in the fall. Students who are currently on behavioral suspension from PMS or who do not perform in the Memorial Day Parade the day before departure will not be eligible for this trip.

Calendar

As with any schedule, dates are subject to change and other events may be added. You will be notified in writing well in advance of any changes and/or additions to the schedule. Please remember that each student is required to attend all concerts in their entirety. This is a big part of each student's grade and is important to the success of the music program! Event dates are planned well in advance so each student can make plans to attend.

For calendar, see petoskeybands.org.

Contact

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